



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

Medicinal Marijuana/Cannabis Task Force (Proposition 215 Implementation Task Force)

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CITY SEEKS BIDDERS FOR MEDICAL MARIJUANA VOLUNTARY VERIFICATION CARD PROGRAM

(San Diego) The City of San Diego has begun accepting proposals for managing the City's Medicinal Cannabis Voluntary Verification Card Program (MCVVCP.) The successful bidder will be responsible for verifying physicians' recommendations that a patient use medicinal cannabis for their medical condition and will issue verification cards to qualified patients and caregivers. These cards will enable law enforcement to more easily identify legitimate medical marijuana users and will help patients avoid unpleasant encounters with law enforcement. Persons bearing a verification card will be permitted to lawfully possess up to one ounce of marijuana, or to serve as caregiver for up to twelve patients, without being subject to arrest.

"The verification card program is the first step in making Proposition 215 -- The Compassionate Use of Marijuana initiative passed by California voters in 1996 -- a reality in the City of San Diego," says Juliana Huphrey, Chair of the City's Medicinal Cannabis Task Force. "No one should have to choose between medication that will relieve their suffering and avoiding an unpleasant encounter with the police. When police officers do not have to spend time checking with people's doctors to determine if their claim of medical need is legitimate, they can spend more time on catching real lawbreakers."

The agency chosen to manage the MCVVCP will also provide a round-the-clock mechanism that officers on the street can use to determine that a card has not been stolen, canceled, or forged. A patient's medical information will be kept completely confidential.

The verification card program was developed by the City's Medicinal Cannabis Task Force, a group of citizens charged with advising the City Council on how best to implement Proposition 215 in San Diego. The City Council approved the card program in February of this year.

The City's Community and Economic Development Department will accept proposals from prospective program providers until July 26, 2002. More information and copies of the "Request for Proposal" outlining the program in more detail are available from Staajabu Heshimu, (619) 236-6635.

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